

Project Description, Request for Parking Reduction and Architectural Narrative for Beall's Grant II

Prepared November 13, 2009

Background and Summary

This application is for an amendment (the "Amendment") to Use Permit No. USE2007-00708 that approved Beall's Grant II as a 109-unit multi-family building on property located at 254 North Washington Street in the City of Rockville, Maryland. As approved, the proposed project contained three levels of residential units over two levels of structured parking. The proposed building formed an "E" shape with small courtyards and a redesign of the courtyard in front of the existing Phase I building ("Bealls I"). Access to the site was proposed from an existing access point on Dawson Avenue and a new access point from Beall Avenue into the garage. The structured parking garage contained 212 spaces and the surface parking lot contained 17 spaces (for a total of 229 spaces).

In summary, the Amendment will not change the use of the Property or the general appearance and character of the project. The Amendment proposes: to reduce the number of units from 109 to 74; to reduce the footprint of the building by modifying the shape of the building from an "E" shape to an "I" shape; to reduce the parking garage to one-level; to reduce the number of parking spaces in the garage to 93; and to provide 28 surface parking spaces (for a total of 121 parking spaces). The proposed access point to the parking garage from Beall Avenue has been eliminated. The Amendment also requests a parking reduction of 49 spaces as set forth below.

General

Beall's Grant II is a new multi-family residential building that includes a three story wood structure over a single underground story of structured parking. The development is located in the City of Rockville, Maryland and is bounded by Beall Avenue on the South, North Washington Street on the East, and existing developed sites on the north and west boundaries. The site is a previously developed "grey field" site located within the City of Rockville's existing utility and transportation infrastructure. The Property is within walking distance of retail amenities, employment locations, and close-by mass transit facilities (subway and bus) in the new high density, Rockville Town Center.

The current concept for the building, which occupies a transition area between taller town center construction and existing single-family residential neighborhoods, has been developed through a series of community meetings attended by the developer, Montgomery Housing Partnership, and the West End Citizens' Association. The resulting building is responsive on all sides to existing context, types of uses and variety of building types. Beall's Grant II is a unique form that complies with the Master Plan of the City of Rockville and that will be an asset to both its neighboring community and the City of Rockville.

Building Code Compliance:

Beall's Grant II will comply with the International Building Code (IBC) 2006, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Life Safety Code 101 2006 and all local amendments. The building will also comply with the Fair Housing Act, and the American with Disabilities Act in public areas. The residential use building (R-2) is a Construction Type 5A wood frame building over a Type 1A concrete frame garage (Use group S-2). The one level garage is below ground and entered by a ramp from the existing parking lot behind the adjacent existing apartment building (Bealls I). All parts of the building will be fully sprinklered, with the garage being protected by a NFPA 13 Fire Suppression System and the residential use building being protected by a NFPA 13R Fire Suppression System.

Parking Reduction

Beall's Grant II will be constructed on an existing parking lot that serves the adjacent existing building, Beall's Grant I. As a result, the new parking garage will serve both buildings. The proposed Amendment will provide 93 spaces within the garage and 28 surface spaces for a total of 121 spaces. Under the Code, the total parking requirement for both Beall's Grant I and II would be 170 spaces. As a result, a parking reduction is necessary. The reduction requested is 49 spaces (or 29% of the parking requirement).

The Applicant, as part of this Amendment, requests that the Planning Commission grant a reduction in the amount of required parking for this residential community, as allowed under the Code. There are several unique circumstances, more fully described below, that warrant granting this reduction.

As noted, Bealls I and Bealls II would require a total of 170 parking spaces (in accordance with Section 25.16.03 of the Code); however, the proposed project is eligible for a reduction in the number of parking spaces because of the Property's unique location and proposed use.

Under Section 25.16.03.h(1) of the Code, the Planning Commission is empowered to grant a reduction in the number of parking spaces required if a project meets certain standards and requirements. That Section provides, in pertinent part:

The Planning Commission in the approval of a site plan within the MXTD, MXCD, and MXNC Zones, ha[s] the authority to reduce the required number of parking spaces for uses in the building or buildings to be constructed provided that:

- (a) A major point of pedestrian access to such building or buildings is within seven-tenths of a mile (3,696 feet) walking distance of a transit station entrance ...; or
- (b) There are three (3) or more bus routes in the immediate vicinity of the building or buildings; or
- (c) There is a major public parking facility available to the public within 1,000 feet of a building entrance, or

- (f) For any other good cause shown.

The proposed development meets the criteria for a reduction in the amount of required parking as follows:

Access within seven-tenths of a mile (3,696 feet) walking distance of a transit station:

The Project is located .5 miles (2,640 feet) from the Rockville Metro Station.

Three or more bus routes in the immediate vicinity of the buildings:

The Project is located within .05 miles from four major bus routes, Metro Bus T2, Ride-On Bus 45, Ride-On Bus 46, and Ride-On Bus 55, all of which stop at the corner of N. Washington Street and Beall Avenue.

Major public parking facility available to the public within 1,000 feet of a building entrance:

The public parking garage at 215 North Washington Street is located within 1,000 feet of the building entrance to Bealls II and could serve as a convenient location for additional parking, if necessary.

Good cause:

The Applicant conducted a study of the use of the parking spaces at Bealls I, a 60-unit multi-family building that is also owned by MHP. Bealls I is an affordable multi-family development and is occupied by tenants with incomes similar to those tenants who will occupy Bealls II. The results of that parking study demonstrated

that the average number of cars that utilized the Bealls I parking lot at 7:00 p.m. during a two-week period was approximately 31.07 cars per day. This is a utilization rate of approximately 52%. The actual rate of usage of the parking spaces at Bealls I provide "good cause" and another justification to reduce the amount of parking required for the proposed development.

In addition to the reasons noted above, the close proximity of several "flex-car" locations to Bealls I and II provides yet another reason to approve the requested reduction in the number of parking spaces. There are currently five locations within walking distance to Bealls I and Bealls II where the flex car provider "ZipCar" currently has cars available for public rental (see Attachment #1). Residents of the proposed development can obtain the temporary use of automobiles from nearby Zip Car locations on an "as needed" basis, thereby reducing reliance on private automobiles and reducing the need for parking spaces.

Based on all the information set forth above, the Applicant's request for a parking reduction in the amount of 49 spaces is reasonable, satisfies the requirements set forth in the Code, and should be granted by the Planning Commission.

Bicycle Parking

Bicycle parking will be accommodated in two ways. Thirty-five secure long term bicycle wall racks will be located inside Beall's Grant II on the first floor and accessible by a corridor leading to an exterior door. At the existing Beall's Grant I building, an exterior accessed 120 square foot room will accommodate 10 bikes in bike wall racks. Short-term bicycle parking will be accommodated by publically accessible ground mounted bike racks at each entrance; will accommodate three bikes.

Building Character

The configuration of the building is an "I" shape that is primarily three stories high, but also steps down to two and a half stories with an English basement to the west (at Beall Avenue) and to two stories at the north, adjacent to the Adams Street houses. The height of the building is 34', and is measured from the curb elevation at the front of the building on Old North Washington Street of 453.7' to the midpoint of the anticipated roof slope. The height of the building has been minimized by utilizing a flat roof, and mansard elevations on portions of the façade are designed to further reduce the visual impact of the building. In response to neighborhood desires, a townhouse treatment along Beall Avenue has been created, including operational front doors and entry stoops to enliven the façade and to provide a pedestrian scale. The project has a series of exterior spaces, including two large "at grade" courtyards. There is also another landscaped courtyard between the new building and the adjacent existing residential apartment building (Beall's Grant I).

Beall's Grant II's exterior will combine a mixture of durable, high quality materials in its elevations. These sustainable materials will include masonry, cementitious siding and trim, and metal roofing on mansard features. Exterior windows in each unit will be operable and of low maintenance materials. The variety of materials will give the building a distinctive residential appearance that will blend with the existing neighborhood, and complement the new, adjacent Town Center architecture.

Features and Amenities

The building has its public entry and common areas on the first floor, fronting on North Washington Street. These areas will include a variety of public amenities including a Club and Card Room with a pantry, a Community Life Room which will accommodate the afterschool homework program,, a Fitness Room and a Business Center/ Computer Lab Room. Mail room facilities complying with ADA standards will be provided for all Beall's Grant II residents. Management and leasing offices for both Beall's Grant I and Beall's Grant II will be located in the front lobby of the new building. A small second floor deck is also provided for residents' use.

The average residential dwelling unit size is 955 square feet, with a mix of studios, one, two, and three bedroom units. All units have generous closets and kitchens. Two and three bedroom units all have two full bathrooms. The building is served by common secure corridors with elevators connecting to the garage. Building and garage entry will be provided with an electronic entry control system for security.

Green Building Criteria

The building will be designed with the goal of meeting the Enterprise Green Communities Criteria. In 2004, Enterprise launched Green Communities as an initiative to transform the way America thinks about, designs and builds affordable communities. The Green Communities Criteria provide a holistic framework for promoting smart growth, public health, energy and water conservation, and operational savings cost effectively in affordable housing design. This green standard is acknowledged by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCA) in their affordable housing tax credit program. Enterprise is also partnering with LEED to create awareness of the need for green affordable buildings. The 2008 version of the Green Communities Criteria is explicitly and purposefully aligned with the U. S. Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System® for Homes version 2008 (<http://www.greencommunitiesonline.org/tools/criteria/index.asp>). The Green Communities Criteria were developed collaboratively by Enterprise and the Natural Resources Defense Council (a founder and longtime supporter of LEED), one of the nation's leading experts in green building and smart development, and in consultation

with other leaders, such as the National Center for Healthy Housing, a leading children's environmental health research organization.

The Green Communities Criteria can result in housing that may reduce energy and water consumption by 20-30%, improve indoor air quality for residents, and a decrease in carbon emissions. Beall's Grant II may receive green credit for its urban location, grey field site and the compact, dense homes it provides and the building will be designed to utilize green energy technology and renewable/recycled finishes. It will provide accessible bicycle storage, thereby encouraging bicycle use. Other important sustainable and green measures will include use of exterior day lighting sensors, a well insulated envelope, "Energy Star" lighting fixtures and kitchen appliances, and energy efficient HVAC equipment. Low water use toilets and plumbing fixtures will be used, and low VOC paints will be specified. Unit finishes will be selected to be durable, as well as to meet indoor air quality requirements. Carpet will be "Green Label", and will be minimized in use. Other finishes may include ceramic tile, laminated wood flooring and recycled rubber flooring or linoleum.

Landscaping will use native and drought resistant species, without an irrigation system. A green roof will be used for the courtyards above the garage, as well as on a portion of the second floor residential building.

Attachment #1:

Locations of existing “ZipCars” within walking distance of Beall’s Grant II

find cars

Enter your address (or neighborhood) to find the nearest Zipcars. Or enter your work address or best friend's address to view the cars in those areas. (You never know where you'll be when you want a Zipcar!) You can also learn more about the cars, like how many groceries or friends you can fit (safely) inside.

live chat

closed

[leave a message](#)**Beall's Grant Site****meet the cars**

200 North Stonestreet
2 vehicles
Maryland Ave/East Middle Lane On Street
1 vehicle
Rockville Metro
2 vehicles

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